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Alaskans go hunting



The moose is one of Alaska's most popular game animals—especially for people who live here. Inside, the story of one woman's very special hunt.

Fairbanks gal faces trial by moose hunt



She grew up in a town where hunting is important. This wasn't Sue Mitchell's first hunt, but this one was different.

Growing up in Fairbanks, I've listened to hunting stories all my life, but this was the first time my dad and I had ever gone hunting together. Yes, I wanted to fill the freezer with moose meat, but the hunt was more important than that. I wanted to show I could keep up and be a good hunter.

My father, mother and I had waited until the last day of the season to go out together. Russ, my husband, was sick, so he stayed home. I told him, "If we're not home shortly after dark, it means we got one." We didn't really expect to, though. It was just an excuse for an afternoon jaunt.

We took my truck to an old road where they had seen moose on previous trips. After about four miles on the rough dirt road, we stopped to watch from the top of a hill.

While Dad stayed on top to search the area with binoculars, I walked down the hill into the brush and made a loop back up. It was a crisp,

sunny September day. As I walked through the thick brush, I noticed the way the sun bounced off the brilliant yellow aspen leaves, but I also noticed how cold it was. I saw lots of moose droppings, but no moose.

After I got back to the top of the hill, a cow moose and her female calf walked out on the road, drank from a puddle, and browsed in the willows.

Many other cars were hunting up and down the road. Finally about 8 p.m. we got cold on the hilltop and decided to drive farther. Every few minutes we stopped to check out the area. Dad didn't see anything, so we drove a little farther.

Just around the next bend, I spotted a moose. It was standing in the brush near the road. Dad looked at it through the binoculars and said excitedly, "By Gosh, it's a bull! Get the gun!"

I had Dad's .308 rifle, and the shell got stuck without going into the chamber. The moose started moving

away, so Dad didn't wait for me. He shot.

Dad's rifle cracked; I swore and finally got a shell in the chamber of my rifle. The moose took off at a healthy speed, and the chase was on. Dad followed the route the bull had taken through the head-high brush, while I went to the right. We ran downhill.

The bull dashed out from behind a copse of spruce trees, but was behind another tree before I could even lift the rifle. Again and again this happened, until on one dash Dad got a good shot at it.

In the silence that followed the shot, I could hear the whoosh of the moose blowing through its nostrils. I reached the bull first. It was down on its side, but one back leg was still kicking.

"Don't get too close!" Dad yelled as he hurried down. I kept my gun pointed at the moose until Dad arrived and put a shot through the back of its head.

By the time it was all over, it was 8:30 p.m., and the sun was due to set in about an hour. I shook Dad's hand and we hurried to work. I took the guns back up to the car, and Mom and I carried down the tools and backpacks before going to work. I

paused for a moment of silent respect for this handsome animal.

Neither Mom nor I had ever gutted a moose before, so Dad had to tell us what to do. Since he needed to be at the kill and Mom has arthritis in her hip, I got the task of carrying the heavy quarters up the hill. Fortunately, it was a young bull. Still, it was a long climb through the thick brush with a heavy pack each time. I made five trips up the hill, counting every step.

With each load, the first sight I saw when I reached the top of the hill was the Big Dipper. When I turned to go back, I saw the aurora borealis dancing on the horizon. As I stumbled through the brush with the flashlight, the light sparkled on frost.

It was 12:30 a.m. by the time we carried the last of the meat up to the truck. We were all cold and

exhausted. As we started the truck I quipped, "We still have one more moose tag. If we see another bull, shall we shoot it?" Mom replied, "You're insane! Besides, the season closed half an hour ago."

It took an hour to drive down the road and back to my parents house. We unloaded the meat, and I called Russ to tell him I was on the way home. I asked him to run a hot bath for me.

I stumbled in the door at 2 a.m., went straight into the bathroom and started undressing. Russ greeted me with a cup of hot chocolate and I drank it in the tub. Despite my aches and pains, and all the work I knew lay ahead in butchering, I felt the satisfaction of knowing I had helped put a winter's supply of meat in the freezer.

—Sue Mitchell

—Hunting on BLM land—

Hunting is the biggest recreational use of BLM lands in Alaska. If you are going hunting this fall, here are a few things to remember:

•Always check the ownership of the land where you will be hunting. **All Bureau of Land Management lands are open to hunting; however, a few areas have restrictions on the method of access.**

Purchase maps of the area from the U.S. Geological Survey office in your community. Then go to a BLM public room, in the Federal Building in Anchorage or in the BLM office

building on University Avenue in Fairbanks. Staff there will help you determine who owns or manages the land.

•Ask about weight restrictions for off-road vehicles and designated trails if you will be using a four-wheel drive vehicle, four-wheeler, weasel or other off-road vehicle.

•Remember that BLM cabins in the White Mountains are not free, they are rented for \$20 a night. You must make reservations in advance at the BLM public room in Fairbanks. If you stay there without making reservations, you may be

depriving someone else of the cabin they paid for.

•Of course, you should be sure to buy a hunting license and read the regulations available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

•BLM rangers will be out in the field during hunting season. They will be checking for cabin reservations, bag limits, illegal hunting practices, and misuse of the public lands.

Have a safe, legal and lucky hunting season!



"Trained" reindeer are led into place for filming at the "top of the world," a locally well-known scenic spot north of Summit Lake within the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor. Mountains of the Alaska Range make a dramatic backdrop for the shot.

Hollywood goes Glennallen

The reindeer wranglers hustled out of the way as Fitch Cady shouted, "Picture!"

"Action! Action!"

A dusty, faded old Checker cab pulling a weathered Airstream trailer lumbered down a hill along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline toward a mini-herd of reindeer. This was the third time, and it still wasn't just right.

"Back to point one!" commanded Cady, the line producer.

Cameras rolled into the long summer evening to capture picturesque Alaskan scenes for an upcoming Universal Studios feature, tentatively titled "Leaving Normal." Cady was in charge of ensuring that his crew, with the help of Bob Crockett and the staff of Alaska Locations, Inc., set up and shot scenes from Keystone Canyon outside of Valdez, to the Top of the World pipeline camp, north of Summit Lake. Some scenes were shot from a Bell Ranger helicopter specially outfitted with an exterior

camera. Many of the sites were on BLM land.

Cady had been to Skagway several years ago for the filming of "Never Cry Wolf," but this was his first time in southcentral Alaska. He admired the beauty of the Glennallen District.

"We really enjoyed our time here. I can see why people want to live here."

Bob Crockett of Alaska Locations, Inc., suggested the locations and applied for a minimum impact permit to use BLM lands. The footage was shot at an air navigation site on the Worthington Glacier; at Paxson Lake, Hungry Hollow, the Tangle River Bridge, and in the Eureka Summit area, besides the Top of the World shoot.

"Leaving Normal" is being directed by Ed Zwik, who directed "Glory," and will star Meg Tilly and Christine Lahti as two women who leave the town of Normal, Wyoming, and end up in the mythical town of Eternity Bluff, Alaska.

But the only stars being filmed in the Glennallen District were the trained domesticated caribou owned by Tom Williams of Alaska Reindeer, Inc. Williams, assisted by his son Thane, daughter Denise, and some hired hands, managed to get the reindeer to congregate along the pipeline access road, so that it would appear that the old taxi and trailer were coming upon wild caribou.

"I have around 350 head," said Williams, "but only about 10 of them are trained. They've been in commercials before, but this is their first movie."

The crew was getting ready to move to the next shot when the unthinkable happened. Instead of heading calmly back to the temporary pen, the leading reindeer got nervous about all the equipment and gear between him and the gate to the pen. He bolted off the access road for open country, followed by the other reindeer.

Moments later, wranglers, production staff, and a BLM employee were running as fast as they could across the boggy tundra, waving their arms, flapping Visqueen, and shouting as they tried to drive the reindeer back.

Twenty minutes later a grateful Williams complimented the group,

"You guys are good enough to catch them in the wild!"

Then the crew quickly set up for the next shot, making the most of the midnight sun.

A release date has not yet been scheduled for "Leaving Normal," but watch for it when it does come out...and watch for the Bureau of Land Management in the credits!

—K.J. Mushovic



The camera was mounted on a temporary track to ensure stability as the scene was filmed. Each time the camera moved to a different spot, the track was taken up and put down again.

RAPS students try field work around the state



Harley Huntington, 16, of Koyukuk, gets his first hands-on lesson with an electronic total survey station at BLM's Minto survey camp.

BLM's Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students, or RAPS, celebrated its fifth birthday this summer as 24 Alaska Native students from all parts of the state gained hands-on experience managing Alaska's vast natural resources.

Since 1987 the RAPS program has fostered an understanding of natural resource management by Alaska's Native youth, and served to stimulate these young people to choose careers in resource management.

Sixteen of the 24 students who participated in this year's program worked for BLM, primarily in field survey camps. The remaining eight students worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the State Division of Natural Resources and the

University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Students assisted in a wide variety of resource related activities, from helping with fish and wildlife habitat studies, to working at archaeological excavations and surveys, to assisting in the day-to-day operations of a cadastral survey crew.

This year marked the first year a handicapped student participated in the program. Her wheelchair proved no obstacle as Evie Mujica, 18, of Nondalton, put her extensive computer skills to work for BLM's Office of Public Affairs in Anchorage.

BLM coordinates the program, lining up agencies where students can work, scouting out sources of funding, coordinating schedules and travel, handling all the payroll and

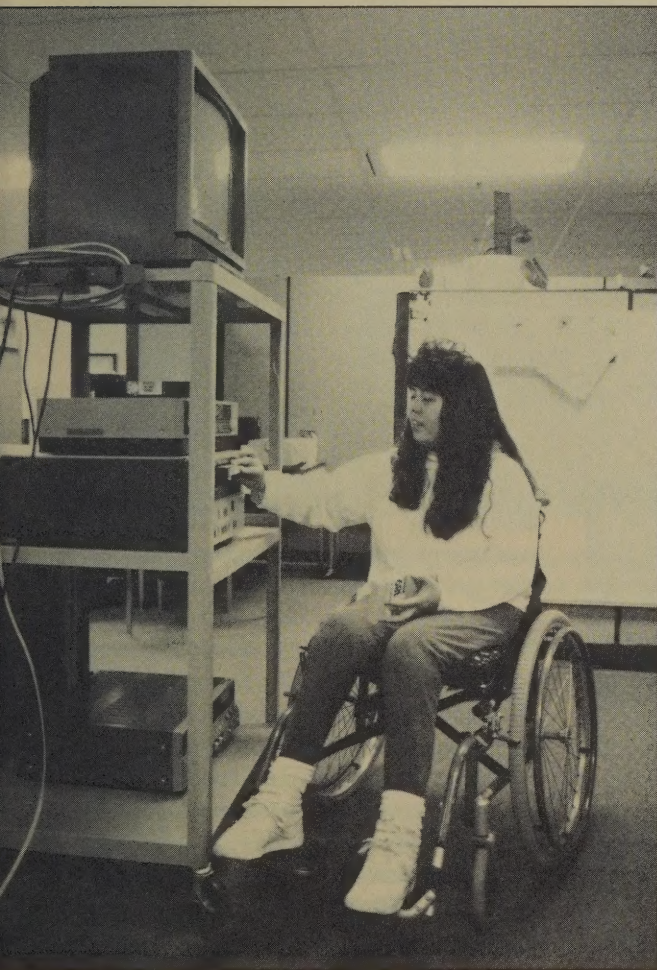
paper work and finding host families for students who work in the cities.

RAPS is currently funded through contributions from several non-profit Native corporations (the Tanana Chiefs, Kawarak, and the Cook Inlet Tribal Council), plus the Alaska Department of Education, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The program is also assisted by a federal migrant education grant.

This year, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company contributed \$10,000 to the program, which funded five of the 24 students.

BLM has also begun to seek other private contributors, and hopes Alyeska's generous contribution will set a precedent for other leaders of Alaska's business community.

—Teresa McPherson



Evie Mujica, 18, of Nondalton, runs video dubs in public affairs office. First handicapped student in the program, she used her Macintosh skills on a variety of tasks. "This is a wonderful program—more students should be aware of it."



Above, second year RAPS student Joee Haugan, 17, of Unalakleet, assists at an archaeological dig near Unalakleet.



Harley Huntington (left) and Clayton Tackett, 17, of Venetie, arrive via helicopter at the Minto survey camp. Helicopters are sometimes the only way to get to remote areas to do the surveying.

A busy Fourth on the Gulkana River

BLM employees had to step lively just to keep up with all the action at Sourdough Campground during the biggest weekend of summer



Top: These folks came prepared to fish, rain or shine.

Below: BLM Special Agent Dean Crabbs shows State Director Edward Spang (right) and Glenallend District Manager Gene Keith the new jet boat to be used for law enforcement.

The Fourth of July weekend is the busiest weekend in BLM's busiest campground in Alaska. Each year Sourdough Campground, 30 miles north of Glennallen, becomes the scene of bumper-to-bumper parking as anglers, campers and river floaters vie for places to park or camp. Sourdough serves as a convenient base for recreation throughout the Gulkana River drainage from Paxson Lake to Glennallen.

Since the Gulkana River is one of the few floatable rivers in Alaska that have road access at both the put-in and take-out points, use has been increasing.

This year BLM stationed more recreation staff at Canyon Rapids, the toughest rapids on the river and site of several mishaps a year. "We helped or rescued at least five different groups that got into trouble at the falls, usually due to their inexperience. We pulled several individuals out by throwing them a safety line," said BLM recreation planner Janelle Eklund. She estimates that more than 300 people in 100 craft went down the river during a four day period.

Meanwhile, BLM rangers Bob Posey and Randy Tracy patrolled the numerous informal camping spots along the river and as far north as Tangle Lakes. A young and "hungry looking" grizzly had a few folks worried at Sailor's Pit. Several people thought the animal hadn't quite mastered the art of fishing.

The rangers also tried out their new jet boat to monitor recreation use in areas previously considered too remote to check more than once a weekend. "Our jobs are so varied that it becomes difficult to determine what's routine and what's unusual," says Special Agent Dean Crabbs. "For example on one evening patrol, we monitored commercial guiding operations and were looking to talk to



As usual, Sourdough Campground overflowed with people on the 4th of July. By the summer of 1993, however, people will see a new boat ramp and totally remodeled campground—with lots of parking.

some of the individual parties camped along the river.

"We found one family that was totally separated. The wives were in camp about 20 miles upriver, a grandmother and two young children were waiting at Sourdough to join them, and their husbands who were running a shuttle trip were in between with a broken motor. We finally got them all reunited by 9 p.m. Then there was a troop of Boy Scouts that had one of their rafts get loose when the tree branch they had it tied onto broke.

The raft was a ways downriver and we towed it up to them. Helping people is what it's all about," says Crabbs.

Larry Kajdan, a BLM recreation planner in Glennallen, has witnessed the annual event for 20 years, and estimates that about 3,000 people were in the area that weekend.

"Incidentally," he said, "the Sourdough Campground renovation is now in progress, and in 1993, people will find a new access bridge and a new boat launch. We will be

adding new campsites and parking areas too. Then no one will have to park out near the highway."

Since the campground will be closed to the public in 1992, BLM has established a temporary river access point and camping area just 1/2 mile from Sourdough. The campground renovation is part of BLM's Recreation 2000 program.

—Edward Bovy

Volunteer wins national award

'Hurry! He's having a heart attack!' said the neighbor.

For his level-headed handling of an emergency situation, as well as his superior performance in serving the public as a Bureau of Land Management representative, volunteer Dwight Arnett received BLM's "Volunteer for the Public Lands" national award from BLM Director Cy Jamison in Washington, D.C. in August.

Imagine driving from Virginia to Alaska in hopes of landing a non-paying volunteer position with the federal government. Not long after being accepted by the Bureau of Land Management, you are sent to an isolated community on the Yukon River in eastern Alaska. You are to relieve BLM's interpreter-custodian of a national historic landmark so he can take a vacation, so you arrive several days earlier than necessary to get prepared. You spend the time researching and learning local history so you can answer tourists' questions. You spend extra hours learning about maintenance and management of the site.

One evening a neighbor knocks on your door and tells you the site interpreter is having a heart attack. The community is 200 air miles from the nearest doctor and hospital. Rushing to the interpreter's home, you begin to administer CPR.

Scary picture? Scary, but true, for BLM volunteer Dwight Arnett.

"BLM was very fortunate to have Dwight Arnett there," commented BLM archaeologist Mike Kunz, who has spent a lot of time working in the Fort Egbert area. "Dwight is a certified emergency medical technician."

Unfortunately, even though Arnett continued to administer treatment throughout the medivac flight to Fairbanks, the interpreter, longtime BLM employee Sarge Waller, never regained consciousness.

After Waller's death, Arnett picked up the management of Fort Egbert National Historic Landmark at the height of the tourist season. He served the public and the small, close-knit community of Eagle for another three weeks, until BLM could reassign an employee to the site.

"During his time in Eagle, Arnett managed Fort Egbert and the Eagle campground in an exemplary manner," Kunz said. "Dwight is a low-key, friendly person. His humanitarian and professional commitment elicited good will and an acceptance of BLM from the local community that is beyond tangible value."

Arnett, a biologist who had worked mostly in Safari Land-type zoos with large mammals, volunteered to work in Alaska during the summer of 1990 because he wanted to experience the state first-hand. He enjoyed the outdoors and wildlife.

"As an avid aviation buff, he had just received his private pilot's license," Kunz said. "He enjoyed Alaska aviation history and the way Alaskans use aircraft to get around this large state."

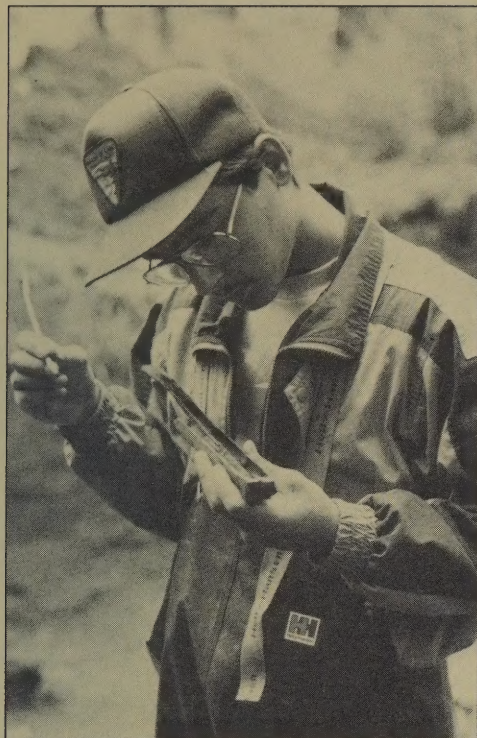
Arnett intended to volunteer for BLM in Alaska again in the summer of 1991, but had to prepare for veterinary school in North Carolina this summer.

"Dwight Arnett's unselfish humanitarian efforts reflected well on him as an individual and on BLM as a public agency," Kunz added.

—Sharon Durgan Wilson

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Field projects focus on Unalakleet this summer

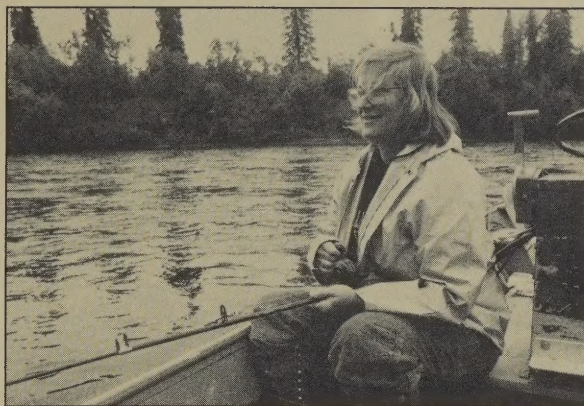


With a twig, RAPS student Joee Haugan gently cleans off a skin-scraping tool. This was one of the most important artifacts found at the site near Unalakleet.

While the helicopter descended upon the two grizzlies, the men stood frozen in the tundra. Armed with a shotgun, Terry Hobbs of BLM's Anchorage District Office and volunteer Richard Bunten watched as the helicopter made deliberate sweeps to move the two bears away from them. Finally Hobbs radioed the pilot and said good naturedly, "Could you move the bears away from us instead of toward us?" After a while the bears moved off into the brush.

Unexpected encounters with wild animals, swarms of bugs, and primitive living conditions are some of the things Bureau of Land Management employees come to expect when they do field work.

Each summer hundreds of BLM employees go into remote areas of the state to conduct studies and work on projects that support the agency's multiple use mission. Lately those employees have the help of an increasing number of



Archaeology volunteer Harriet Hornblower fishes in the Unalakleet River during her spare time. She and four other volunteers excavated Native dwellings.

volunteers.

This summer many of the BLM Anchorage District's field activities were concentrated in the Unalakleet area.

Hobbs and Bunten, whose encounter with the bears was without incident, were members of a crew marking a stretch of the Iditarod National Historic Trail outside of the small coastal town of Unalakleet.

Trail markers

For almost a week, three BLM employees and two volunteers trudged through ankle-busting, mosquito-infested tundra armed with pulaskis and saws. They marked and set tripods on 12 miles of trail so winter travelers can find their way more easily.

Crew leader Jake Schlapfer said, "A lot of our time was spent trying to locate the trail, which frequently disappeared into the sloughs."

Archaeology

Another project involves BLM archaeologists and several volunteers, who are excavating a Native settlement believed to be more than a hundred years old.

Excavation at the archaeology camp has progressed quickly, says archaeologist Julie Steele, because of

swift work done by five volunteers. Recruited primarily from east- and west-coast colleges, these volunteers unearthed the walls and flooring of five structures. Further excavation will reveal whether the structures are homes or caches.

Steele is now beginning to sift through a small collection of tools, baskets and jewelry retrieved from the site. These artifacts will give her a better understanding of

the people who inhabited the area.

The scarcity of tools and jewelry led Joee Haugan, a Native teenager working on the dig, to surmise, "These people were nomadic Indians who lived a very hard life."

Next year Steele plans to excavate another, larger Native settlement upriver, which she expects to be just as fruitful.

Fish studies

In another project, BLM has been studying the grayling population of the Unalakleet River for the last two years. This year BLM fisheries biologist Mike Scott used four Student Conservation Association volunteers to help him catch, tag and record information about grayling in the Unalakleet National Wild River. (BLM manages the river corridor.) These college students had the enviable task of fishing all day with either a pole or a seine.

To support these ongoing projects, the BLM maintains a base field camp on the river. As the field season comes to a close by September, BLM's partnership with its many volunteers will be credited for many accomplishments this field season.

—Danielle Allen

BLM Director Cy Jamison and Alaska State Director Ed Spang met with The Times-Mirror Conservation Council in August for a week-long, in-depth look at resource management issues in the Kobuk District. The trip was part of the council's new working partnership agreement with BLM. The council will inform the public about land management issues, promote wise use of natural resources, and conduct education programs.

BLM Steese/White Mountains District Manager Roger Bolstad and Eagle Historical Society President Doris M. Rogers signed an agreement for providing recreational and educational opportunities at Fort Egbert, the Eagle Campground, and within the City of Eagle.

After BLM restored five historic Army buildings in the 1970s, the Eagle Historical Society developed exhibits, and gives educational walking tours of two restored buildings as part of its Eagle Historic District tour.



Right, Alaska Lt. Governor Jack Coghill and Yukon Territory Commissioner Ken McKinnon cut the ribbon opening a new international exhibit on the Alaska Highway at the Canadian border near Boundary. The U.S. side of the exhibit describes the building of the Alaska Highway in 1942 and shows an Alaska history timeline. The Canadian side discusses the surveying of the U.S.-Canada border and describes the Yukon Territory. BLM researched and designed the U.S. panel, shown above.

BLM's Townsite staff in the division of conveyance management has a new phone number: (907) 271-5689.

During the fall hunting season, BLM's Arctic and Steese/White Mountains districts are operating visitor contact stations at Coldfoot and the Yukon River crossing on the Dalton Highway. Between August 1 and September 27 they are gathering statistics on the number of hunters in the area, their harvest, and other recreation information. They're also operating a station at Nome Creek, where they're giving out information about safety, BLM cabins and trails, and restrictions on using off-highway vehicles. The recreation staff reports hunting has become popular in the White Mountains this fall.

BLM Alaska State Director Ed Spang has signed a four-way partnership agreement to enhance fisheries management, education, public use and habitat management on public lands and national forests in Alaska. Participating are the Alaska Council of Trout Unlimited, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Alaska Region of the U.S. Forest Service.



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